



Reference No: 12/02/2012

19 February 2012

MDP Condemns Dr.Waheed Regime's Attack on Independent Media

The Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) has condemned Dr.Waheed Regime's attack on, Rajje TV, country's only TV station which broadcasts the views different to Government out of 4 TV channels and 4 Radio stations.

Maldives Broadcasting Commission (MBC) recently warned Raajje TV that they may ask the "necessary authorities" to confiscate their broadcasting equipment. MBC says Raajje TV is only permitted to broadcast in Male' region although many people outside Male' have been accessing the station via satellite. Radio stations SunFM and religious conservative, Radio Atoll have been broadcasting nationwide, despite the limited broadcasting license issued for them, without any warnings since the formation of MBC.

Raajje TV is one of the very few media outlets not under the control of the new regime or its allies.

Allies of former President Gayoom and his associates dominate MBC's board. The Maldives has four television stations that air news. DhiTV and VTV are owned by Champa Moosa and Gasim Ibrahim respectively. The MDP believes these two tourism tycoons helped to finance the 7 February coup, by providing millions of Rufiyya in bribe money for the police and military. Their television stations spewed out a constant stream of anti-MDP propoganda and they have been issued a warning by MBC only once in the last two years despite they have violated the broadcasting regulations on multiple occasions

TV Maldives, formally called MNBC, is the state TV and radio broadcaster. The network was overrun by protesters and mutinying police and soldiers who entered the premises by use of force and fire arms in the morning of 7 February, hours before former President Nasheed was forced to resign in a police and military-backed coup.

MNBC Managing Director Adam Shareef said that President Waheed's brother, Ali Waheed, led the protesters and security personnel who stormed the broadcaster. "He shook my hands and said that he was there to take over MNBC on behalf of Vice President Dr Waheed. This was before Nasheed resigned," Shareef told Minivannews.com. See: <http://minivannews.com/politics/police-fired-gun-in-takeover-of-mnbc-video-reveals-32053>

Since MNBC's takeover, and its rebranding to 'TVM', the name it held under Gayoom's regime, it has also spewed out a daily dish of pro-government propoganda, either ignoring news events involving the MDP or reporting them with an anti-MDP bias.

"President Waheed's government has claimed it will uphold fundamental freedoms. However, one of its first acts since assuming power in a policy and military-backed coup is to turn the state broadcaster into nothing short of a government propaganda outlet, while threatening and intimidating the only independent television station," said MDP spokesperson Hamid Abdul Ghafoor.

Click here for video footage capturing the moment MNBC was stormed by protesters and the security forces on 7 February:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=KUyYIO-IE7U

ENDS

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